**Prevent Team**

**Coventry City Council**

Email: [prevent@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:prevent@coventry.gov.uk)

16October 2023

Dear Colleagues

Hearing of the assault launched by Hamas and subsequent escalation in violence between Israel and Palestine will no doubt have affected all of us in some way, our thoughts are with all of the innocent victims of this devastating conflict.

You will be aware of how heightened violence can often have a knock-on effect on inter-faith relations, hate crime incidents and exploitation by extremists here in the UK.  As such, we have put together some useful information:

* A refresher on Prevent referrals.
* Guidance on activism v terrorism.
* Useful resources for the classroom, for parents and teachers.
* Letter from Department for Education.
* Coventry Prevent Education

Prevent Referrals

Prevent seeks to intervene early, to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.  Where someone is concerned a person may have been deliberately exposed to harmful terrorist narratives, it is right that they refer them to Prevent.  A Prevent referral does not amount to an accusation of criminality.  Rather, it allows for a multi-agency assessment to be conducted and support to be provided to help divert people from engaging in harmful activity.  Through this referral, the person will be able to receive the vital support they need.

All referrals to Prevent are carefully assessed based on the specific details of the case.  If a person is found to not be at risk of radicalisation, the case is immediately closed to Prevent.  They may be referred to other appropriate services, or no further action may be taken.

Activism/Protest v Terrorism

Lawful non-violent protest or activism does not meet the threshold for Prevent referrals.  Holding legitimate political views is not an indicator for extremism provided they are not expressed or furthered by statements, deeds or actions which result in harassment, intimidation or threats of violence against individuals or society itself.

Encouragement of terrorism, including glorifying the commission or preparation of acts of terrorism, fundraising for the purposes of terrorism, and inviting support for a proscribed terrorist organisation, are all criminal offences.  Hamas are a [proscribed terrorist organisation](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2/proscribed-terrorist-groups-or-organisations-accessible-version) in the UK.

**Useful resources for the classroom, parents and teachers**

We know that pupils will have been exposed to a breadth of media coverage and social media responses, they will be processing this information and may want to talk about it at school.

Talking about subjects such as terrorism and conflict can ignite wider discussions about politics, identity, history or prejudice, which are so important in helping young people understand the world around them. The advice is that where possible teachers and parents should be proactive in these conversations, not reactive. There is a huge amount of information for children and young people to absorb after shocking events, and we as adults can help make sure they feel able to talk about any confusion and fears.

Schools should feel confident to provide a safe space where issues around terrorism, war and violent conflict can be discussed openly, so that students can understand what it means and develop the knowledge required to challenge inaccuracies.

For pupils:

* Our colleagues at Picture News have put together a slide pack that I have attached alongside this letter, delivery is designed for KS2 and KS3.
* CBBC Newsround discuss in an age appropriate way, [Israel and Hama – What’s happening?](https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/67051424)
* Newsround have also put together a [short video aimed at children](https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/13865002) and explains what they can do if upset by the news.

For Teachers/Parents/Governors

* Solutions Not Sides (SNS) are providing free to attend ‘safe space advice and briefings’ for teachers each Tuesday at 4pm over the coming weeks. [Book via Eventbrite.](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/solutions-not-sides-30-minute-teacher-safe-space-and-advice-briefings-tickets-734275837797)
* SNS have also put together other resources including a 30-minute assembly guide. [Download here.](https://solutionsnotsides.co.uk/learning-resources)
* There is a whole host of useful resources on the [Educate Against Hate website](https://www.educateagainsthate.com/) that is our DfE approved site for Prevent. This is recommended for all resources in relation to Prevent, Extremism and Radicalisation.

Department for Education

The Secretary of State for Education Gillian Keegan MP has written to all schools, here is a [link to the letter](https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDFE/bulletins/3763f13) shared.

Coventry Prevent Education

We know the conflict will be ongoing for some time and will continue to impact conversations with our young people. We are always here to support with any advice, support or a conversation on this topic and anything else in relation to Prevent. Do not hesitate to contact the Prevent Education Officer; [viv.brosnahan@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:viv.brosnahan@coventry.gov.uk) or myself [manjeet.pangli@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:manjeet.pangli@coventry.gov.uk) .

Regards,

A close-up of a sign

Description automatically generated

Manjeet Pangli

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Coventry Prevent Team